



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

North Africa Department
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
London SW1A 2AH

15 August 2014

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0630-14

Thank you for your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act which we received on 24 June 2014. In your request you asked:

I would be grateful if you could send me copies of all communication between the Foreign Office and Vitol in relation to Libya sent in 2011.

I am writing to confirm that we have now completed the search for the information which you requested.

I can confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does hold information relevant to certain elements of your request, which I enclose alongside this letter. We are however withholding some information under the following exemptions:

Section 37

Information relating to the Royal Household has been withheld as it is exempt under sections 37(1)(ad). We acknowledge that releasing this information would increase our transparency by giving greater public access to the information we hold. However, the diplomatic and goodwill work carried out by the Royal Household is dependent upon the maintenance of the confidentiality of their communications with public authorities. It is therefore important not to undermine this. It is our view that in this case maintaining the confidentiality of such communications outweighs the public interest in revealing their content.

Section 40(2) and (3)

Some of the withheld information is personal data relating to third parties. It is our view that disclosure of this information would breach the first data protection principle, which states that personal data should be processed fairly and lawfully. Section 40(2) and (3) of the Freedom of Information Act therefore apply. It is the fairness aspect of this principle which we think would be breached by disclosure in this case. In such circumstances section 40 confers an absolute exemption on disclosure. We do not therefore have to apply the public interest test.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the Freedom of Information Act, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless it is exempt. The information we have supplied to you may now be published on our website together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context.

The information supplied to you continues to be protected by the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. You are free to use it for your own purposes, including any non-commercial research you are doing and for the purposes of news reporting. Any other re-use, for example commercial publication, would require the permission of the copyright holder. Most documents supplied by the FCO will have been produced by government officials and will be protected by Crown Copyright. You can find details on the arrangement for re-using Crown Copyright information on the [TNA](#) website.

Information you receive which is not subject to Crown Copyright continues to be protected by the copyright of the person, or organisation, from which the information originated. You must ensure that you gain their permission before reproducing any third party (non-Crown Copyright) information.

Yours sincerely,

Libya Desk Officer
North Africa Department



We keep and use information in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. We may release this personal information to other UK government departments and public authorities.